

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 12 and 14, and added new claim 16. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 4-12, and 14-16 are now pending in the application. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter is added, and traverses all the rejections.

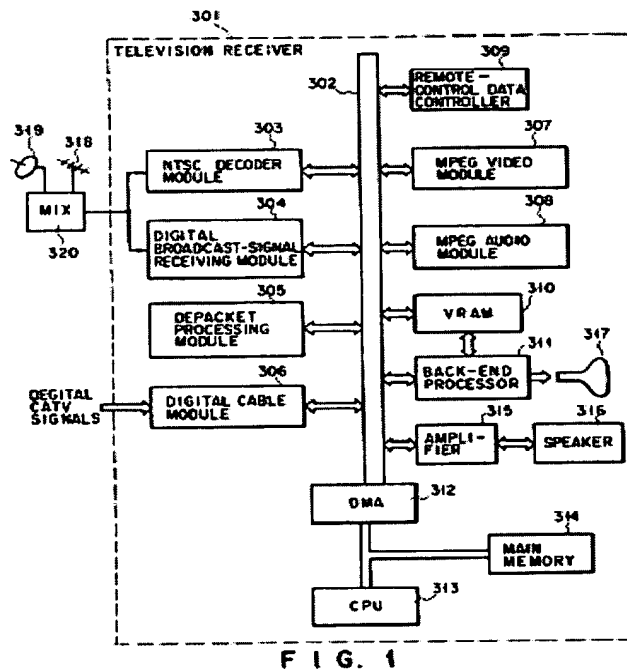
Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chimoto et al. (U.S Patent No. 5,838,383; “Chimoto”).

Claims 1, 2, 12 and 14 have been amended to recite that “each of the main *board* unit and the extension *board* electrically coupled to the connectors of the backplane includes” four signal lines. As such, the claims now plainly recite that the *boards* themselves, rather than the connectors of the backplane, carry the four signal lines. Applicant respectfully submits that the modules described in Chimoto fail to disclose or suggest the noted features of the claims.

The Examiner has been relying on the disclosure that the “bus” described in Chimoto carries various signals in order to render current rejections (See Office Action: pages 10-11, “The bus carries various signals, e.g. ‘transmittal signal’, a ‘MPEG transport stream’, an ‘analog audio/visual signal’, and a ‘selection signal’, to other modules on the bus.”). However, in view of the amendments to claims 1, 2, 12 and 14, Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claim features are not disclosed or suggested by Chimoto.

While signals of differing type travel through the *bus 302*, as shown below in Figure 1 of Chimoto, each of the modules 303-316 is specifically contemplated to perform a specific function, and therefore, each of the modules *do not* include multiple signal lines of four different type, as recited in claims 1, 2, 12 and 14. (See Chimoto: col. 7, line 30 - col. 8, line 52).



For instance, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Chimoto that the digital broadcast-signal receiving module 304 would have “an analog audio/visual signal line for an analog audio/visual signal,” as recited in claim 1, 2, 12 and 14. Such is due to the fact that the module 304 is specifically contemplated to receive digital broadcast signals (See Chimoto: col. 8, lines 6-10). Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Chimoto fails to disclose or suggest the noted features of claim 1, 2, 12 and 14.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, 12 and 14 are patentable over Chimoto. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5, 7, 9 and 15 are patentable by virtue of their dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is patentable over Chimoto based on the rationale analogous to those discussed with respect to claim 1.

Claims 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto in view of Trovato et al. (U.S Patent No. 6,469,742; “Trovato”). Trovato simply lacks a backplane including a plurality of connectors. Applicant respectfully submits that Trovato fails to make up for the noted deficiencies of Chimoto discussed above, and therefore, submits that claim 6 is patentable over Chimoto in view of Trovato.

Claims 8 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto in view of Battini et al. (U.S Patent No. 6,919,792; “Battini”). Battini generally relates to a method of controlling household devices, and therefore fails to disclose or suggest the backplane carrying multiple signal lines of different type. Applicant respectfully submits that Battini fails to make up for the noted deficiencies of Chimoto discussed above, and therefore, submits that claims 8 and 15 are patentable over Chimoto in view of Battini.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trovato in view of Whetsel (U.S Patent No. 5,497,379; “Whetsel”).

The Examiner continues to assert that one ordinarily skilled at the time of the invention would have been motivated to combine Trovato and Whetsel in the manner suggested by the Examiner (See Office Action: pages 11-12). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

In determining the propriety of the Patent Office case for obviousness in the first instance, the prior art must be considered in its *entirety*, including disclosures that teach away from the claims (See: MPEP §§ 2141.02, 2145(X)(D)).

The Examiner's alleged motivation for combining the two references is based on the cited portion of Whetsel which states that "[i]t is useful, especially when a bus controller has not accessed boards in the backplane for some time, to verify the presence of the boards in the backplane" (See Whetsel: col. 14, lines 59-60). As such, the entire utility of performing such identification of components described in Whetsel is predicated on the notion that no prior test regarding identification of boards has been performed. In other words, the usefulness of the identification process of Whetsel is touted in the face of a *significant* uncertainty regarding whether the boards are connected to the bus backplane. Such uncertainty may be especially keen in Whetsel, as Whetsel relates to a system performing parallel execution of test operations where there can be up to 255 boards connected to the backplane (See Whetsel: col. 14, lines 53-58).

However, as acknowledged by the Examiner, the system described in the primary reference Trovato *already* devises a way to identify components connected to its system, namely by having each of the modules 16 report itself to the processor. Trovato affirmatively indicates that "[b]y identifying the components, device 10 knows what hardware/software components are currently available through the registry on operating system 20" (See Trovato: Fig. 1; col. 4,

lines 45-47). As Trovato deals with an upgradeable television system with a limited number of modules 16, Applicant respectfully submits that *no* evidence points to suggest a degree of uncertainty which would have led one ordinarily skilled at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Trovato to additionally implement a subsequent verification operation described in Whetsel.

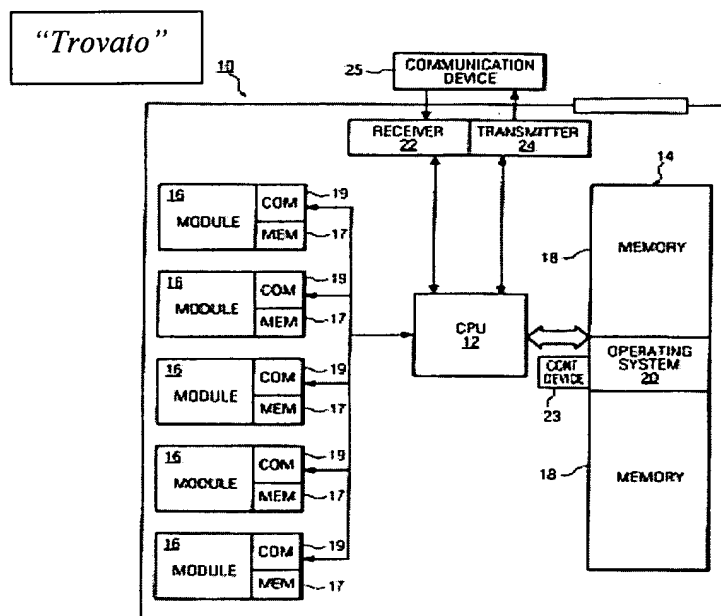


FIG. 1

Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner must supply the rationale why one ordinarily skilled at the time of the invention would have been led to combine the teachings of the two references while *inclusively* accounting for the explicit teachings of the primary reference Trovato which already provides a way to identify the modules connected to the system.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that if indeed the motivation for combining the two references can be drawn from the “usefulness” of the subsequent verification of components connected to the board, as described in Whetsel, the Examiner still fails to provide any evidence why one ordinarily skilled in the art would have *specifically* chosen to incorporate the system

architecture found in Whetsel into the system of Trovato. The verification process described in the primary reference Trovato takes place by the modules 16 reporting themselves to the CPU 12 at startup or power up. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that one ordinarily skilled at the time of the invention could have at least contemplated a subsequent verification process by similarly having the modules 16 again report themselves to the CPU 12.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has failed to supply any evidence why one ordinarily skilled in the art would have been led to specifically incorporate the verification process described in Whetsel among all the different possible ways of implementing such process.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trovato in view of Whetsel, and further in view of Battini et al. (U.S Patent No. 6,919,792; “Battini”).

Applicant respectfully submits that Battini fails to make up for deficiencies of Trovato in view of Whetsel, as set forth above with respect to claim 10. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is not rendered obvious by the proposed combination of Trovato in view of Whetsel, and further in view of Battini.

New Claims

For additional claim coverage merited by the scope of the invention, Applicant is adding new claim 16. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 16 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 10.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Application No. 09/848,503

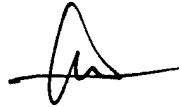
Attorney Docket No.: Q64255

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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